Break a Leg!

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Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association

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The views expressed in the essays and illustrations in this volume are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association.

Jesus falls for the first time

Foreword

As every fledgling writer knows, it is one thing to write that first book, but quite another to produce the second. The Blueprints Reader Committee may be forgiven a flush of triumph at having accomplished it. In this Blueprints Reader II (in what promises to be a continuing series), you are offered another collection of essays on topics related to the mission and ministry of Catholic schools in Alberta.

The authors are people like you; you have met them at Blueprints conferences; they work in Catholic schools as you do. And they have something to say—as you do. Their essays may at first glance seem unrelated and highly personal. But take a second look—and a third. They begin to hang together, as mission and ministry inevitably do.

Hank Zyp's passionate demand for attention to what we do—as opposed to what we say—in international relations parallels Karol Ksiazek's plea for attention to what goes on in our school districts. Joe McMorrow pinpoints the necessity for attention to what goes on in our school principals. Ric Laplante urges attention to our language if we are truly to hear one another in these exchanges. And John Burger presses for the required analysis and planning if all of this is to be more than holy rhetoric. Interspersing the essays are brief ruminations from Ralph Himsl. As always, he heightens our sensitivity to the big meanings of the small events which fill our days.

All of these writers—your colleagues—invite you to talk and write back to them.

The Blueprints Reader Committee is informal and its members self-selected. You could join them. Think about Blueprints Reader III.

Jesus falls for the second time

Acknowledgments

The Board of Directors of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association is proud to support the efforts of the Blueprints Reader Committee by publishing this, the second body of work it has produced in as many years. As with the first volume, *Visions for the Catholic School*, this book continues to capture the leading edge of thought on issues which are central to Catholic education both within and beyond Alberta's borders. We feel this publication adds significantly to the small but growing collection of literature on the Catholic school and urge others to advance this worthy goal. But for now, we wish to thank those who contributed to the reality of a Blueprints Reader II.

Our commendation goes to Ralph Himsl, Kevin McKinney, and Ric Laplante for their ongoing commitment to the Blueprints vision.

We honor the committee members who so unselfishly gave of their Saturday mornings and any free time from jobs and responsibilities to bring the project in on a self-prescribed timeline. Our thanks to Brady Long and Dan Garvey who provided moral and editorial support to the writers and who both currently have projects in the works.

Our gratitude and appreciation to the talent of Hank Zyp who once again illustrated the book with such gentle humor and poignancy.

The talents of an editor can never be underestimated. We are once again grateful to Isobel Temple's skills in bringing the central idea of an article to the forefront while remaining sensitive to the author's style.

Many thanks go to the project's manager, ACSTA Administrative Assistant Kate Dunbar, and the staff of Publication Services, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta who once again offered advice, typeset the book, and proved as committed to a successful second publication as anyone involved.

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Jesus falls for the third time

Mission Statement

1. Jesus Christ came to reveal the true identity of humanity as a people saved from its sin of rejecting God—a people who can discover its full identity only by responding to God's voice. Any authentic concern for humanity then is profoundly religious, just as any authentic concern for religion is profoundly humanistic.
2. The work of the Christian Church is to help humanity discover its proper identity as called to God in Christ by the Spirit—a call demanding either rejection or acceptance.
3. Catholic schools exist as that dimension of the Church concerned with directing secular educational formation towards an encounter with this world of the sacred. This means providing an education that prepares the way of the Lord, that opens up secular learning to its relationship with God's saving call in Christ and in Christian history.
4. Catholic schools, then, help children learn about themselves and their world in relation to God—a relation embodied in the life and message of Christ Jesus and in the community bearing the name Christian. It follows that Catholic schools complement the formation which is ideally provided in Catholic homes and parishes: for inasmuch as it is the school that structures and teaches the wealth of human knowledge and practice, so it is the Catholic school that can best teach children to reflect on and celebrate the religious meaning of that knowledge and practice.
5. Accordingly, the Catholic school is needed, not just to provide classes specifically in religion and Christianity, but more importantly to set forth the world of the sciences and humanities in its relation to religion and Christianity.
6. Catholic schools cannot produce religious convictions or religious conversion, as this is a gift of love from God alone. But Catholic schools can and must provide a climate conducive to religious transformation, by encouraging colleagues and students to express their religious convictions openly in a manner that unites thinking and feeling.
7. To accomplish this, teachers in Catholic schools should know and live the religious dimension of the secular world, if they are to communicate that dimension in the classroom. This does not mean, however, that the religious practice of teachers must be in all cases the governing norm of employment in Catholic schools. It is of even greater importance

that the Catholic school nourish and promote authentic Christian living in its teachers. In turn, teachers are aware their educational ministry already gives them an active role in Catholic parish life.

8. To meet the purpose of Catholic education in our own day, there is need of including the religious and Christian dimensions of humanity in teacher-training programs at universities and colleges, just as there is need of continuing religious education for teachers already in the schools.
9. Catholic education should be highly diversified, sensitive to the changing needs of various racial, ethnic, and economic groups. Every effort should be made to introduce community and neighborhood programs that embody the specifically Catholic dimension of childhood and adult education. The heritage and purpose of Catholic schools in Alberta should itself become a topic for discussion in school programs.
10. Catholic school administrators exercise a responsibility, not only in relation to government policy-makers and to the Bishops of Alberta, but also in relation to Catholic parents and children. As educational leaders, administrators have the task of coordinating the many diverse tasks demanded by education, and of building community by infusing those tasks with a unifying Christian and Catholic vision.

Break a Leg!

Hank Zyp

Scene 1

If the world is a stage, then a table at a sidewalk cafe in Amsterdam's busy central square can be considered a front row seat. Humanity passes by like a continuous uncensored documentary. Audience participation is so intense, it is difficult to separate the actors from the spectators.

Right in front of us a huge, gleaming tourist bus poured out a delegation of 13-year-old South African girls. This is drama of the highest order, requiring no script; its inherent contradiction is inescapable.

As they came on stage and swarmed around our table, the girls epitomized the innocence of youth, the confidence of affluence, the poise associated not only with a ruling elite but with a ruling race. These young girls belonged. Without stage fright they shared the spotlight like a Greek chorus.

In spite of the charm of these children, the jarring reality struck me that these young innocents were the daughters of apartheid's architects. These were the daughters of one of the richest groups of white people in the world, related to me through 16th century Dutch roots and through our shared Christian dominance of a largely non-white, non-European world.[1]

The thought transformed me from a spectator to an aware actor in the drama. South African apartheid, after all, is but a high profile microcosm of a global malaise. Twenty-five percent of the world's population, mostly white Christians, have kept the other 75% in virtual slavery for almost four centuries. The girls mirrored me.

Scene 2

Later I traveled through Germany, and in Munich I shared a bus with some schoolchildren. Neatly dressed in short pants or skirts, white tops, leather satchels strapped to their backs, they acted with the exuberance of children anywhere when school is out and the summer vacation is about to begin. An innocent scene.

Perhaps it was their language which triggered involuntary thoughts in my mind. Their shouts of laughter brought back memories of another time. These children were the grandchildren of the men and women who dreamt of establishing a Third Reich and who, in their ambition to build a perfect society for themselves, allowed a holocaust for others. These were the grandchildren of the men who occupied my country and most of Europe for a brief time in history.

Like a rerun of an old movie, I see my Jewish neighbor as he jumped over the fence and grabbed me in his arms to run toward the safety of his house while a Messerschmitt strafed the city's harbor. My neighbor was never heard of again. I see my own family fleeing the city on bicycles during an all-night bombardment which turned the

midnight sky to flame. Other flashbacks follow. I feel the fear of footsteps in the night and hear the monotonous drone of bombers in the sky. I experience the taste of sugarbeets dished up in endless disguises and see myself, weak with dysentery, crawling to the pail in the corner of the hayloft where we slept for five long years.

The surrealism of the scene before me is that the children do not share my memories. They jostle through their antics as if nothing had ever happened. There is no symbolic gesture of apology, no attempt to change the comedy into a morality play. There are no special effects, except those in my mind, to give the scene any significance.

The children leave as quickly as they had burst upon the stage and I recall some of the lines their elders had spoken. "We did not know," they said, and these words reverberate around the world. "We followed orders," they explained, a refrain that sums up the frailty of our shared humanity.

Scene 3

The last scene of this drama took place upon my return to Canada; Canadians looked as innocent as the busloads of South African girls and German children.

We are happy in the belief that we are a peaceful people; we have no colonies and we are not at war with anyone. Our homes are open to refugees and immigrants and our churches attract Sunday worshippers. We are hard-working, generous, and enjoy the respect of all nations. We are proud to be Canadian.

Much of our bliss is also steeped in ignorance. While Jim Keegstra,[2] my fellow teacher, made headlines denying the past, denying the horror of the World War II holocaust, the rest of us were busy denying our complicity in the holocaust of 40,000 children dead of starvation, disease, and oppression each and every day.

No one seemed to have enough imagination or compassion to question Canadian foreign policy, formulated to promote our own narrow national interest. Yet since the '60s we have become the largest per capita military exporter in the world, according to Noam Chomsky (1985). Individually and collectively we bear the responsibility of being accomplices in mass murder. We enriched ourselves through the destruction of Indochina, and we have continued to profit from the misery and suffering of other people (Lappe & Collins, 1979; see also Chomsky, 1986; Collins, Lappe, & Kinley, 1981). Chomsky comments:

> *As long as Canadians are comfortable playing that role, they will continue to play it. If they look at the consequences of that, they'll see that they are playing a role parallel to that of the people we condemn as the "good Germans" under the Nazis.*
>
> *(1985, p. 51)*

Sixty percent of our military export goes to the United States, making us a silent partner in what the Pope condemned as "imperialism."[3] Some $150 million worth of military equipment is sold directly to Third World countries annually, according to Public Accounts Canada. Increasingly it is weaponry which can be used easily against local populations. Even our non-military bilateral assistance is criticized as being part of a "beans and bullets" policy which favors our corporate investments in the Third World. Our government supplies aid to the government of El Salvador, claiming falsely that the human rights situation has vastly improved in that country.

When John Paul II thundered his prophetic words: "The poor South will judge the rich

North," few of us understood what he was talking about. Few of us had ever questioned the paradox of rich Christians in a hungry world. Most of us were content to ascribe it to God's infinite blessings. Few of us realized that slavery had never been abolished but simply pushed farther South, out of our sight. And fewer still of those present at the historic gathering in Edmonton dared to believe that they were perhaps witnessing the last hurrah of a Western triumphalist church which for centuries had condoned brutality in order to gather souls for the glory of God.

If it is difficult to deal with our violent past, it is even more difficult to accept that we are in any way connected with the violence of the present. Few of us have read the script. Fewer still are involved in writing it. We have learned to accept our role: to look and feel peaceful. We concentrate on our small interests without any sense of the big drama. Blissful ignorance is institutionalized to such an extent that it is difficult to know truth.

As educators we have been too busy training people to fit into the slots of our society to worry about education. We have not received an education ourselves; how can we be expected to pass it on? "We did not know" and "we followed orders." Incompatible as these postures are with the search for truth, they characterize much that happens in educational circles. Our schools, like our foreign policy, are activated by self-interest in spite of rhetoric to the contrary. We are more concerned with the maintenance of the status quo than with the consequences of this maintenance. For the majority of this world's population the perpetuation of the status quo means the perpetuation of poverty.

We can watch this drama unfold in five-minute episodes on television, or we can become involved at a much deeper level. Our immediate reaction is to send out sacks of wheat in the hope the problem will go away; it is the charitable thing to do and it enhances the good feeling we have about ourselves as generous people. Bishop Dom Helder Camara of Brazil, who understands poverty at a more intimate level, criticizes this sentimental goodwill approach of ours when he asks, "When shall we have the courage to outgrow the charity mentality and see that at the bottom of all relations between rich and poor, there is a problem of justice."[4]

It is the voice of the South judging the actions of the North, and Bishop Camara puts his finger on the weak spot of our charity shield when he comments: "When I give the poor a crust of bread they call me a saint; when I ask why they are poor they call me a communist" (see also Camara, 1984; de Broucker, 1970; Hall, 1979). Mexican author Carlos Fuentes, is more graphic: "The impoverished masses of Latin America will very soon be starting their assaults on the citadels of affluence."[5] This we do understand, so we arm ourselves for the onslaught. We arm local thugs under the direction of oligarchies, tyrants, dictators, and oppressors to do the dirty work of keeping the hungry hordes at bay. We arm the poor to eliminate the poor, brothers to kill brothers, while we wash our hands in innocence.

How does this occur almost unnoticed? Through what I call the "castle phenomenon." Inside the castle, people are courtly,

Overcoming our charity mentality

chivalrous, and civilized to each other. There is an emphasis on culture, etiquette, and ritual. The ruling nobility governs with divine authority. Their prayer books are illuminated, goldleafed, calligraphed art treasures. Their bedroom windows open into the chapel to facilitate direct communication with God and the Holy Virgin. Life inside the castle is virtuous and the evil of the world is shut out by deep moats and thick walls. Only the bravest of wandering minstrels will enter and speak in riddles of the oppression of the serfs and peasants, oppression which is required to maintain the cultured standards of those who dwell inside the castle.

We, the affluent of the world, live in such castles. Our moats are communication gulfs which exist between ourselves and the rest of the world. Our walls are constructed of nuclear arsenals held together with a mortar called fear. Whenever our walls are threatened, more fear is induced, the moat is deepened with falsehoods, the walls are buttressed with missiles, and we are promised a dome of magic laser beams.

Our fear is the fear of the unknown: the unknown enemy, the unknown future, the fear of knowing, the fear of being wrong, the fear of being vulnerable, the fear of being compassionate, the fear of being faithful, the fear of losing our privileged position. So we protect ourselves, we bolster strength, we use power to maintain power. We justify the abuse of the powerless on the grounds of balancing power with our enemy the Eastern Bloc. That balance must always be in our favor, for we are good and they are evil. Exploitation is necessary to maintain our military and economic superiority; and conversely our military superiority is necessary in order to maintain exploitive practices. We have not been able to find our way out of this vicious circle.

In Canada we test Cruise missiles. Nuclear submarines enter our harbors. Our universities and businesses become involved in Star Wars and we cling to the United States so that we may continue to oppress without the interference of the officially designated "enemy." In defense of democracy we nail the Southern peasant on a two-beamed cross of East-West tension and North-South inequity.[6]

Succinct judgment from the South, this time from a Guatemalan Indian woman, explains: "The poor must learn to defend their lives with the same zeal as that of the rich defending their possessions"[7] (see also Jonas, McCaughan, & Sutherland Martinez, 1984; Esquivel, 1982).

I believe that this is the crux of the problem. In our zeal to Christianize the world, we have enriched ourselves at the expense of the converts. Christianizing became a justification for plunder, exploitation, and enslavement. We have used God as a means to enlarge and strengthen our political, economic, and spiritual empire. And now, entrenched, we dole out God as one of our possessions we are willing to share with the poor. And if in this noble endeavor we have caused the deaths of millions, we console ourselves with the reminder that it is not the body that counts as long as the soul is saved. We have peddled eternal rewards and traded them for gold and silver.

But surely good Christians would not allow such violations of human rights without pangs of conscience? It has not been easy, but we have decorated our churches with some of the plunder to glorify God, and we remember the poor in our prayers.[8] So much for religion as the opium of the people. But surely Canadian and American champions of freedom and democracy would oppose the continuation of conditions which cause the deaths of 15 million children annually? The fact is that much of our foreign policy and aid support activities and conditions which cause these deaths. But surely this violence continues because the general public is left in the dark? If we do not know, do we want to know? Evil exists in part because good people allow it to happen.

Our ignorance and silence are part of our collective sins of omission. Any serious student of history soon discovers that the North American and European role in perpetuating misery, oppression, torture, and slaughter is not only significant but is also a consequence of longstanding geopolitical and institutional structures. And like the slave owners of our romanticized past, we feel morally righteous about it. Our barbarism is possible because we consider ourselves as people and others as lumps of matter that do not matter.

One way of not knowing is simple "blocking"; we say "don't lay a guilt trip on me" or "pictures of starving children make me sick." I believe it was Mark Twain who once said: "It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them."

It is our unwillingness to know which has made our right to lie more sacred than the right to life. Our indifference to others and our concern with self has made it possible for our international behavior to be suppressed, ignored, or denied. Notwithstanding this concealment and distortion of reality, we continue to idolize the freedom of our press, speech, and opinion.

One popular opinion has it that the poor of the Third World are not our problem; they are their own problem. Anyway, we have enough problems of our own. If the poor are not *our* problem, then maybe *we* are *their* problem. They are poor because we are rich.

From a Gospel point of view the poor are not our problem either; they are our blessing. They are the beggars at the gate, the Christ incarnate inviting us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and set the captives free. The statement "The poor will be with you always" is, in my opinion, not an expression of fatalism as some would interpret it. Rather it is a promise equal to the promise of Christ, "I will be with you always." It is a sign of the hope that God has not abandoned us. We are given ample opportunity to be judged (Matthew 25), to belong to the sheep or the goats.

What is the role of the Catholic school in this sometimes farcical, sometimes joyous, almost always tragic historical human drama? On what side of the curtain do we find ourselves? Some of us are satisfied to leave well enough alone. Some, however, hunger for truth and must find it outside the school, the

Thank you Lord that I'm Canadian and not like those people in the back of the Church...
ZYP.
Counting your blessings is not enough.

"Perhaps the most difficult task in our role as teachers is that we must educate ourselves before we can hope to educate others."

news media, and even outside the parish church. Some of our students now feel alienated by an uncaring world. No one wants to discuss what lies heavy on their hearts. The school is a small "fact factory," parceling out fragmented knowledge unrelated to the Creator's grand design. For the sensitive student, the school is often an intellectual desert and a spiritual wasteland where the emphasis is on jobs and jocks, bread and circuses, departmental exams and crazy tie days. As on the national scene, real life and death issues are insufficiently dealt with in favor of non-issues of building the school spirit or the Canadian identity. The occasional religious celebration cannot alter this reality; it only highlights the offensiveness of ritual without substance (Isaiah 58; see also Amos 5:21-24).

Even the noble objective of instilling hope in our children falls short of what is expected of us as Christian teachers, as long as we do not also teach that we are the cause of despair for the majority of this world's hungry children. The hope that we must foster in our students, then, is not just the hope that comes with self-confidence and the ability to survive in our present competitive system. That brand of hope is gratuitously offered in TV commercials and in popular drugstore magazines, and it is intrinsically self-centered.

The hope the Christian teacher is asked to exemplify and impart is that we are effective sources of joy and strength for others, a hope that is firmly rooted in the Easter joy of the resurrection. It is a hope that our individual and collective choices do matter in the overall scheme of God's plan of peace and justice for his people. The hope is that our lives can and do make a difference, not just for ourselves but for others, for each other.

To instill this kind of hope is countercultural. It requires us to believe that it is better to give than to receive. It means that we do not let the marketplace rule our lives, but that the Gospel becomes our guide. It means all sorts of things alien to us. It means that we no longer expect students to excel in order to wind up at the top of the heap, but that we expect them to qualify themselves in order to be of greater service to others. It means that we have to learn to see the plank in our own eyes before we point to the splinter in the eye of our neighbor. It means that we teach our students not to cheer when Tripoli is bombed, but that we learn to love our enemies as Christ loves them. It means that we no longer tolerate a poverty that is largely man-made. It means that we must learn to outgrow our charity mentality. It means the unthinkable: that we who feel so peaceful about ourselves are regarded as oppressors by two-thirds of the world's population.

Perhaps the most difficult task in our role as teachers is that we must educate ourselves before we can hope to educate others. This demands humility, conversion, transformation, metanoia; not just a change in thinking, but a change in our behavior. This pilgrimage of discovery is risky; it can be soul-shaking. Our old concepts and familiar world views will be undermined. If we accept the consequences of our discovery, we risk losing the support of our friends, the security of our jobs. For people like Bishop Romero, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Jesus of Nazareth it has meant the loss of life.

In spite of this, a growing community of people, including teachers, are taking these risks. This community, which reaches across old boundaries of denomination, race, nationality, and language, is beginning to realize that now is not the time for neutrality. Members of the Christian faith community and also members of the human family not of the Christian faith, are becoming aware that a commitment to life is an invitation to choose sides and to become prophetic. Gregory Baum, in a keynote address to participants in the Liberation Theology Conference held in Vancouver, February 1986, said: "Christians are asked to name the plague." We are not only expected to denounce that which is anti-life but we are by faith mandated to engage actively in nurturing life. The Catholic schools curriculum supports that notion.

Teilhard de Chardin pointed out that humanity is no longer the passive object of evolution, but that through our choices we make evolution happen. Fatalistic determinism is no longer an appropriate response for our time. Theologians from the developing world have clarified again God's involvement in human history and the parallel human involvement in God's plan to bring about the Kingdom. We are asked to set the stage and write the play within God's grand design.

In spite of the apparent immensity of the task, ordinary people, teachers and students among them, are discovering that one does not have to be a saint or a hero to understand the world we live in and to act to stop the violence of injustice. Ordinary people are becoming aware that we share responsibility for the continued violence of hunger and oppression as long as we remain spectators in our comfortable seats in the top balcony.[9]

What must we do once we have decided to leap onto the stage? Do we continue to turn out obedient actors who will remember their lines, or are we to encourage independent playwrights, choreographers, stage designers, critics, and dreamers? Is it pretentious for faltering humans in an imperfect world to dream of a better world, or do we accept our mandate to be perfect as the Father is perfect? Should we not become attentive to the revelation of children? Can we become harbingers of hope by demonstrating to our students that, in spite of stage fright, we will do our best to make this the finest play ever? Or should we just bungle through our lines and hope to make it unnoticed till curtain time? Should we prudently hide our talents and remain silent while the "experts" make fools of themselves and us? Or should we shape each act with new vision? Should we hog the stage to ourselves, or should we recognize that each of us creates the play? Should we accept that in this production, which is the only game in town, we actors are all students and teachers?

There are no answers except the familiar ones: an honest attempt at understanding each other and what we are doing to each other; a commitment to join in the act inspired by the promise of the Kingdom; determination in spite of limited success and repeated disillusionment that we will not rest in peace until peace prevails—not on my terms and for my sake, but for Christ's sake, because He is present in all of us.

"Ordinary people are becoming aware that we share the responsibility for the continued violence of hunger and oppression as long as we remain spectators..."

The Canadian Bishops in their pastoral letter "From Words to Action" tell us:

> We live in a world that oppresses at least half the human race. Right around us, human suffering of many kinds scars the face of Canada. It is not enough to see injustice and violence. Silence amounts to a form of consent and approval of what is happening. These conditions will not improve on their own. We, the people, have the responsibility to change them. For the Christian community this struggle for justice is not an optional activity. It is integral to bringing the Gospel to the world. For we stand in the biblical tradition of the prophets of Israel where to know God is to seek justice for the disinherited, the poor and the oppressed. [10]

So climb out of your balcony and join in the act, the action, the actuality. Break a leg!

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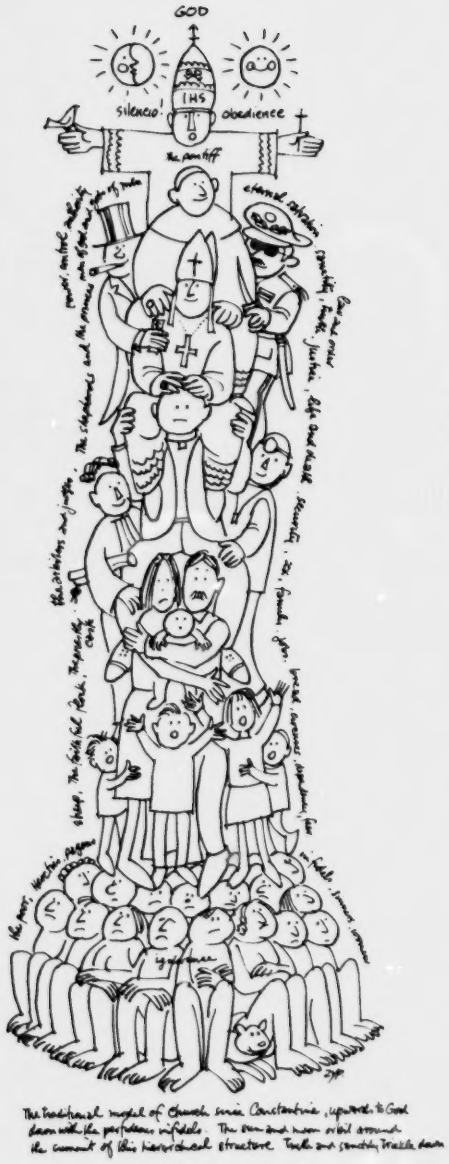
Study is an important part of the conversion process as long as we do not allow it to become an end in itself. Christ, who is our model teacher, was the Word Incarnate, the Word become Flesh. He had much to say about the pharisaic obsession with the word as the letter of the law. His sacrifice on the cross was an act of love which emphasized His sermon on the mount. As followers of Christ we are asked not just to speak but to act; we must not only raise our voice, we must stand up physically and risk breaking that leg. And you will break it, but you will stand up again to have it broken once more.

Notes

1. "It is the minority which is well fed, and the minority which has secured control over the world's wealth and over their fellow men. Further, in general that minority is distinguished by the color of their skins and by their race. And the nations in which most of that minority of the world's people live have a further distinguishing characteristic—their adoption of the Christian religion" (Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania).
2. Mr. Keegstra, mayor of Eckville, Alberta, and social studies teacher at the local public high school, was charged with promoting hatred for an identifiable group by rejecting the historical evidence related to the death of six million jews in German concentration camps during World War II.
3. Since the pontificates of John XXIII and Paul VI, we notice a shift in Catholic social teaching. Before them, Pius XI spoke of the emergence of "a new imperialism of money." By this he meant that economic empires were in the making that did not stop at national boundaries but exerted power all over the globe. In his encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967) Paul VI acknowledged that these economic empires have often more power than the governments of small nations and that these governments are therefore unable to protect the well-being of their people. In this situation the power to be feared is that of the transnational organizations of the West which manipulate the governments of the Third World to their own



The traditional model of church since Constantine, upward to God
down with the profane infidels. The sun and moon orbit around
the summit of this hierarchical structure. Truth and sanctity trickle down

advantage. John Paul II in his Edmonton homily (1984) addressed the question of an increasingly wealthy North and an increasingly poor South: "And the poor people and the poor nations, poor in different ways, not only lacking food, but also deprived of freedom and other human rights, will judge those people who take away these goods from them, amassing to themselves the imperialistic monopoly of economic and political supremacy at the expense of others."

4. Dom Helder Camara, Bishop of Recife, N.E. Brazil, had this to say about justice: "Justice does not mean that everyone must possess the same quantity of things. That would be awful. It would be as if everyone would have the same face, the same body, the same voice. I believe in the right to have different faces and bodies. By justice I understand a better distribution of estates, at a national or international scale. There are two types of colonialism: one is internal, the other external. About this last one it is enough to say that 80% of the resources of the planet are in the hands of 20% of the countries. In order to demonstrate the internal colonialism it's enough to speak of Brazil. There are certain zones in my country which one cannot define as underdeveloped: this would be too generous; there the people live as in the prehistoric times in caverns and they are happy if they can find anything to eat among rubbish. What can I say to them? That they must suffer so that they may go to Paradise? Eternity starts here on earth, not in Paradise."
5. CBC, "IDEAS" 1986.
6. "While so many people are going hungry, while so many families are suffering destitution, while so many people spend their lives submerged in the darkness of ignorance, while so many schools, hospitals, homes worthy of the name are needed, every public or private squandering, every financially depleting arms race, all these, we say, become a scandalous and intolerable crime. The most serious obligation on us demands that we openly denounce it." Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 1967.
7. The words of an unidentified Guatemalan Refugee in one of the camps I visited in Southern Mexico during my study tour of Latin America in 1985.
8. "The guarantee of one's prayer is not in saying a lot of words. The guarantee of one's petition is very easy to know. How do I treat the poor? . . . because that is where the God is. The degree to which you approach them, and the love with which you approach them, or the scorn with which you approach them . . . that is how you approach your God. What you do to them you do to God. The way you look at them is the way you look at God" (Oscar Romero, February 5, 1978).
9. Acting is the proper Christian response to an understanding of the reality in the light of a faith reading of the challenges this reality presents. "So the church criticizes those who would restrict the scope of faith to personal or family life; who would exclude the professional, economic, social and political orders as if sin,

love, prayer and pardon had no relevance in them" (Puebla, *Final Document*, 515; cf. 824).

10. The Canadian Catholic Bishops have made repeated strong statements on social justice. This explains in part the difference of the papal homilies in Edmonton and Managua. "As disciples of Christ all of us have a responsibility to play a role in the creation of a social order based on justice" (1976 Labor Day Message of the Canadian Catholic Bishops). See also: "Sharing Daily Bread," "Northern Development: At What Price?" "Justice Demands Action" and the much criticized pastoral statement on the Canadian economy and labor issued in 1983.

Ways of Knowing

Ralph Himsl

Peter Craigie, late of the University of Calgary and of this world, made a case for Catholic schools to recognize their opportunity (and responsibility) to teach in the two traditions dominant in our culture. He used a powerful metaphor: he spoke of the Traditions of Athens and Jerusalem.

The Tradition of Athens teaches us to know by reason. It reaches back to that astonishing period in the history of humankind when Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Euripides, Pericles, and others showed reason awake. This tradition comes down in a broadening and rushing stream through Francis Bacon, England in the 17th century, and French Enlightment to the dizzying discoveries of our own age. Craigie spoke of how well our work in the schools fitted this tradition.

The Jerusalem Tradition deals with knowledge gained through faith. This tradition, Craigie said, ought to mark our special work as Catholic schools. The Gospel message of faith, hope, and love, and the incomparable act of the resurrection provide a reason for lessons of import: love of God and his world, love of each other, commitment to the search for truth, seeing God's presence in others, and hope in and for oneself. The Tradition of Jerusalem offers answers to questions of "why?" which the Tradition of Athens accepts as beyond its scope.

These metaphors have a beauty about them, but they cover exactly two thirds of the traditions of knowing.

If the traditions of Jerusalem and Athens have to do with faith and reason as ways of knowing, a third—out of Sparta—has to do with power as a way of knowing. People resort to power and its corrupting ways when efforts in the nobler traditions break down. Two examples must do: William Golding's allegory *Lord of the Flies* comes to its shocking conclusion when the British naval officer, revolvers slung at his side, arrives just in time to prevent the now completely depraved boys from committing the bestial murder of Ralph. The last pages of the novel sink into us like a stake through the heart. A photo from Colombia, taken during the visit of Pope John Paul II, shows the Pope giving a blessing at Mass. Above him in vivid counterpoint stands an armed policeman, making his own statement.

Where faith and reason question, power asserts; when reason and faith reflect, power forces; if faith and reason understand, power overwhelms; as reason and faith ennoble, so power corrupts. The tradition of Sparta makes a claim as a way of knowing in the debased and cynical aphorism "might makes right."

A Catholic school finds its teachings in the bright traditions of Jerusalem and Athens; but it ought also to know of the Tradition of Sparta and its darkening ways.

An eclectic legacy... what is Roman?

The Ecology of the Catholic School

Karol (Karl) Ksiazek

> *I die his Majesty's most obedient servant, but God's first.*
>
> *(St. Thomas More, in Bolt, 1966)*

During the past 14 years I have attended many retreats, conferences, seminars, and lectures dealing with education, schools, and the teaching vocation. I have listened to the wisdom of such people as Tad Guzie, Sister Juliette Valcourt, Joe McMorrow, Ralph Himsl, Ric Laplante, Gary Hudak, and the Reverends David Louche and Steve LaCroix. It was Maria Della Rocchetta who first inspired me to write; and it was Ralph Himsl, Ric Laplante, Kevin McKinney, and others in the Bluprints Reader group who kept me at the task (and "took me to task"). In response I accepted their wisdom and learned to participate in their vision of hope. They not only lit the fire inside me, but now are maintaining it by sharing their dreams and accepting me as I am.

Then I return to the reality, to the Nietzscheism of my microcosm where a desire for power and position seems to be the primary motivator; and where we who view participation in education as a vocation, a calling from God, are either ridiculed, pushed aside, ignored, or buried. It is here that I become frustrated and angry at what I see around me. It is also here that I become afraid to express these feelings because I am afraid of what others might think of me; and so I allow it all to become, in the words of Janina Diodati, "part of my baggage" (Guzie & Diodati, 1986).

As the frustration and anger grow, I find the baggage weighing me down and keeping me from becoming as effective in my vocation as I might be—and so I must be rid of my baggage. I must not be afraid to show my inner self, for in the words of Reverend Howard Keon, CSB, in a Sunday homily to Our Lady of Assumption parish in Lethbridge, "Anger and hatred are not the opposite of love, they are rather the expression of a frustrated love. Fear is the opposite of love." If I remain afraid, I cannot love; and if I cannot love, I cannot teach. Thus I need a punching-bag, a catharsis. I have the need to be rid of my baggage and at the same time to reaffirm a vision, a dream, a hope, a goal. Therefore I write, fearfully, knowing that I have few if any answers and a great deal yet to learn; but for the moment this simplistic understanding, this hope I have gained from my mentors must be my anchor. I must cling to it so that I do not drift aimlessly; and I must write and seek response to my writing, so that I may gain new insight and be better able to modify and improve my anchor. I must not be afraid.

> And who shall harm you when you seek what is good? But should you suffer in defense of

"If I remain afraid, I cannot love; and if I cannot love, I cannot teach."

> justice, blessed are you. Do not fear them or do not let them disquiet you. (Peter 3:13-15)

Religious education in a Catholic school community consists of more than just a straightforward presentation of "religious" subject matter based on scripture, doctrine, and theology—"truths" which constitute Catholic belief. Religious education, rather, should bring students, teachers, and parents to a realization of how the truths of Catholic belief offer concrete ways of helping the universal Catholic community toward spiritual faith development. In the process of faith growth, the relationships which form between students and the family, school and church community have a more lasting effect on the student's spiritual growth than any objective, doctrinal study. Faith growth is nurtured through the efforts of a faith community which exemplifies its responsibility to nurture that growth.

This faith community is composed of three interlocking segments based on areas of responsibility. The primary, and most heavily burdened, area of responsibility for the development of faith rests with the parents.

> Parents first must teach the fundamentals of the faith about God and the fundamentals of practice concerning love; if they fail, all else will fail . . . The universalization of education has had a serious and subtle effect of removing the sense of urgency and responsibility from the families as to their role in education. . . . The first message from the Judaeo-Christian tradition is the call to recognize the centrality and importance of the home in laying a foundation on which every subsequent form of education will build. (Craigie, 1983, pp. 4, 6)

Children bring a sense of awe and mystery to their search for answers to moral and ethical questions. They place a total trust and faith in their parents; so it is imperative that family life be structured so that the child's natural search for meaning and purpose in life is directed to its ultimate conclusion in God. This process of faith growth within the child is more the direct result of the entire family's acceptance of God, and its exemplification of that acceptance as perceived by the child in daily living, than it is of any objective doctrinal position left anchored in the abstractions of "you must!" or "God said so!"

The second area of responsibility for development of faith rests with the church community, which is not dictated by geographic location or boundaries, but rather the church community as a universal congregation following a system of beliefs, with Christ as its head. This church community is the result of dialogue leading to acceptance of a common philosophy, values, goals, and objectives, while at the same time leaving room for the plurality of expression.

> The responsibility of the Church in Christian education is to bring the faith communicated in the home into the larger context of the community of faith, to clarify the larger implications and responsibilities of being a Christian. (Craigie, 1983, p. 7)

Community necessitates an individual's awareness of these common objectives and a conscious and active participation in a life style which exemplifies a belief in them.

The parish is the local unit of the larger community we call church. The students within this local parish unit are, as in the case of the family, influenced by their perception of

parish community life as compared with the broader church community life (and by any contradictions they may perceive between the two). It is therefore important that the daily life of the parish community and its individual members reflect the philosophy, values, goals, and objectives of the universal community of church. All members of a parish need to participate actively and wholeheartedly in parish life if students are to be positively influenced in also becoming active participants in the life of the church.

The third area of responsibility for the development of faith rests with the Catholic school. Although all too often the case, it never was intended that the Catholic school be held wholly responsible for either the initial or the total faith growth of the student. Rather, it is the purpose of the Catholic school to support, continue, and develop further the work carried out by the parents and church community.

> If the home and the church abandon or do not succeed in their responsibility for religious education, then the school hasn't got a chance. If the home and church don't do their job, then it's almost too late for the school to rescue a difficult situation. (Craigie, 1983, p. 6)

Before the Catholic school can serve its purpose within the church community, it is necessary that the student be predisposed to and desire faith growth. Students must be in the state of wanting what is offered and not forced to accept "what is good for them." It is beyond the ability of the Catholic school to play any but a subordinate and supportive role in the faith growth of its students.

Within the Catholic school, the school staff, including teachers, administration, school board, and support staff, accepts responsibility for the moral and Catholic atmosphere of the school. A school staff should realize that the relationships between themselves, students, and church affect a student's faith growth more than any direct instruction within the structured religion program.

For the creation of a school's moral climate reflecting the truths of church community, one must be prepared to apply those truths to daily life style and the relationships which are formed as a result of it. Religious education is not only a direct reflection of what happens within the social fabric of the school, but even more it is a reflection of the relationships formed between the school community and the communities of the family and parish.

> When we reflect upon the life and the ministry of of Jesus, we should never forget that one of the most central aspects of the life of Jesus was that He was a teacher. The fact that Jesus was a teacher has a great deal to say about teaching as a profession. . . . It is not just a job and not just a profession; it is also a vocation, a form of serving God and the Church, a calling whose honor and antecedents go back to Jesus Christ. (Craigie, 1983, pp. 5, 12)

Therefore, it is the responsibility and within the educational mandate of the school community to play a leadership role in the development of proper relationships based on Catholic moral and ethical standards, between itself and the communities of the family and parish.

"A schoolstaff should be aware that the relationships between themselves, students and church affect a student's faith growth more than any direct instruction within the religion program."

If the school community's life style is implicitly based on Freud's concept that man's basic need is for pleasure and self-gratification, or on Nietzsche's emphasis on self-aggrandizement, it cannot and will not find anything but self-defeating unhappiness as its ultimate end.

> Preparing people to function in our society, to live, to have a job, to support a family, must always be central in our educational goals; but we must remember that that is only half the task, and a well-trained highly skilled person who does not know why she or he lives, or what it means to be moral, is an uneducated person. (Craigie, 1983, p. 11)

For any community to grow in faith, the individual members of that community require a realization that man's basic need is for meaning and purpose. This will toward meaning and purpose finds its answers only through engagement in the struggle which has as its goal a solidarity with God.

This desire for connectedness with God should pervade all aspects of school community life and therefore deal not only with the human relationships fostered within that community, but also with the morals and values in all subject disciplines and all areas of operation and decision-making.

> In theory, what goes on in a school is that a curriculum is specified, the teacher teaches according to the curriculum, the students learn according to the curriculum, and this interaction between student and teacher takes place in the social environment of the classroom. That theory is true so far as it goes—it just doesn't go far enough. There isn't any educational system where there is a *direct curriculum* without an *indirect curriculum*. . . . The indirect curriculum is at least as influential as, and in my judgement, more influential than the direct curriculum; the indirect curriculum is the teacher as such. (Craigie, 1983, pp. 9-10)

How the school community deals with subject discipline objectives and the processes it follows in its daily operations and decision-making also communicate and develop the moral atmosphere of the school community.

We are living in a period when it is more important than ever to apply a holistic understanding of morality to the various problems and concerns which plague humankind if we are to achieve equitable and permanent solutions to them.

> The advent of the technological revolution, the invasion of our lives by the massive expansion of the computer and other media, bring with them both challenge and responsibility, namely the recognition that this new technological age in which we live places new and extremely important moral responsibilities upon us, and therefore new dimensions of moral education. . . . We live in an age of relativism. There is no longer a common national consensus as to what constitutes good and evil, right and wrong; we have moved into a period which is characterized by a multitude of faiths, but more significantly by the absence of faith. The age of relativism is characterized by "I know not what is right or wrong, only what is good or bad for me." We need to recapture the moral legacy of the Judaeo-Christian tradition that has two fundamental anchors: the notion of good and the notion of evil. Our problem will be how to convert those into ethical and moral decisions in particular crises. (Craigie, 1983, p. 17)

Today's students face political, scientific, technological, and environmental issues which, if not solved in the near future, will

most certainly result in the self-extinction of humanity. It is evident from history that tomorrow's politicians, scientists, technologists, environmentalists, and indeed all members of future society will have to adopt different approaches from the self-serving ones of the past. Students require a morality which embraces a desire for the improvement and growth of all humankind. This quest can only be founded in an acceptance of what is traditionally termed, "an absolute moral order," "God," "the salvation of all mankind," or "bringing to fruition the Kingdom of God."

The school community should deal with the issues of our "global village" in a way which exemplifies this acceptance of the Kingdom of God so as to ensure its continuation and growth in the future. Therefore, the moral atmosphere of a school community is dependent on all members of that community and not just on those members directly involved in the instruction of a formal religious education program.

> All educational systems exist in order to serve people. School systems exist to serve young people, college systems another group of people, and so forth. It follows that any person who is engaged in education, whether as teacher or administrator, or trustee, insofar as that educational system exists only to serve human beings at different stages of their life, must have some understanding of what human beings are, why they exist and what is their nature and character. . . . The hiring of a teacher is vastly more crucial than the recruiting of a president of a major multi-national corporation. The average school teacher over his or her professional life may influence directly more than 2,000 persons very profoundly, indirectly twice that number, as those persons moved, shaped and fashioned by the teacher later become citizens or parents or politicians. The role of the teacher in our society is thus vastly more important than the role of the senior executive, or the role of all those persons who accumulate vast sums of money, or who shape and direct industry. The teacher, through the explicit curriculum and through the indirect curriculum, influences people enormously. That fact places a great responsibility on trustees and on administrators, as it does on persons who are preparing to be teachers. (Craigie, 1983, pp. 2, 10)

It is necessary that spiritual developments of the members of a community complements their physical and psychological development as well as keeps pace with world social development. Humans are historical creatures in that the events of our past shape the events of our future. However, as Steinbeck points out in *The Grapes of Wrath*, our past must be viewed from the point of view of "results" and not "causes." A present cause is a result of something previous; it is not an independent thing in itself, but has its own history. So in reacting to it we must react to that history. Our tendency is to immediacy, but faith growth is not an immediate growth. It is, rather, a process which is the result of an accumulation of all our history. It is only through examining our historical search for meaning and purpose that we achieve an understanding of our transcendental meaning. It is left, then, for us to develop life styles which reflect our desire to achieve this transcendental meaning.

In developing such life styles, the members of a school community should be aware of, and accept, three basic premises. The first is

that the events of our own individual pasts shape our present and future lives. In the study of literature, a character is discerned through his actions; he is what he does as a result of the conflict between himself and his situation. The same rule holds true in our own life style choices.

The second premise consists of a belief that through scripture and the record of Christian history, we have the ability to deepen our own story. If we view ourselves as results of history, we are in a position to understand better why we are who we are. We have support for our own beliefs not only through the Catholic community of the present but also through the past. As a result, we see ourselves as part of a continuum which stretches into the future.

The third premise constitutes a "faith response." It is through the celebration of Christian biblical and historical events that we not only deepen our understanding of how God acts in our daily lives, but we also exemplify our beliefs to those around us, thus giving witness to Christ. We make a faith response.

This last premise is, perhaps, the most difficult for a school community to act upon. Because the school community is a part of the greater Catholic community, it has a responsibility to that Catholic community to nurture it and help in its total faith development. It is also the responsibility of a member of a community to accept the burden created by another non-functioning member, and to support the growth of that member until such time as he or she is again capable of accepting a proper role within the community.

The Catholic school community must ungrudgingly accept such responsibilities even in the face of conflicts with the parish community, because its responsibility to the universal church community is overriding. The Catholic school's responsibility is not to unquestioningly reflect local values and morals, but rather to accept a leadership role in reflecting universal Catholic values and moral standards.

The necessity for this clear-sighted adherence to church doctrine has even acquired secular support, in the unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of Canada (December 1984) concerning Margaret Caldwell who had been teaching at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Vancouver. "At issue," in the words of the court, "is whether it is contrary to the Human Rights Code for a denominational school to refuse to hire a teacher who has personally disregarded church teachings."

On behalf of the court, Mr. Justice McIntyre (1984) wrote:

> The Catholic school is different from the public school. In addition to the ordinary academic program, a religious element which determines the true nature and character of the institution is present in the Catholic school. To carry out the purposes of the school, full effect must be given to this aspect of its nature and teachers are required to observe and comply with the religious standards and to be examples in the manner of their behavior in the school so that students see in practice the application of the principles of the Church on a daily basis and thereby receive what is called a Catholic education. (p. 18)

The processes carried out within the school in order for it "to achieve its specific aims,"

according to Mr. Justice McIntyre, depend

> not so much on the subject matter or methodology as on the people who work there and teachers are required, in imitation of Christ, to reveal the Christian message, not only by work, but also by every gesture of their behavior. (p. 25)

He goes on to state that "the teacher shall exhibit the highest model of Christian behavior and that religious and moral training shall occupy the principal place in the curriculum," and that the difference found in the Catholic school "does not consist in the mere addition of religious training to the academic curriculum. The religious or doctrinal aspect of the school lies at its very heart and colours all its activities and programs." Mr. Justice McIntyre is saying that religious education is more than just another subject: it is a way of life which is taught not through the lecture process, but rather through example. Therefore, the proper lesson can only be learned if a proper example is made available for the student to observe.

My initial response to the verdict in this case was along the lines of "Right on!" but upon further reflection I am no longer so sure of myself. I now find an uneasiness stirring in the back of my mind. What was Jesus trying to teach us when He invited those of us who are without sin to cast the first stone? Perhaps I should also read again Ralph Himsl's essay "The Gospel-Centered School" (ACSTA, 1985), especially the sections dealing with forgiveness and the purpose of errors.

Since the Catholic school is meant to support rather than take control of the religious education of the student, then the argument of the Supreme Court of Canada applies not only to teachers and support staff, but to all those involved in Catholic education. As a teacher in a Catholic school, I find it very difficult to fulfill my vocational responsibilities "in imitation of Christ," when by doing so I am in direct, or what is perceived to be direct, violation of the policies of the school board or administration. Therefore, I suggest that these implications extend to all members of the Catholic community: parents, trustees, administrators, and parish members as well as to teachers.

Often, however, we find the Catholic school community striving to reflect the wishes of the local community rather than taking on its proper leadership role in binding that community to the truths and realities of the Catholic church itself.

> I believe, when statesmen forsake their own private conscience for the sake of their public duties—they lead their country by a short route to chaos. (Bolt, 1960, p. 12)

It is the responsibility and duty of the Catholic school community to reflect the truths and philosophy of the universal Catholic church in all aspects of its daily operations, and therefore it is imperative that the members of that school community incorporate this reality in all aspects of their endeavors. It may be politically and socially expedient to "oil the squeaky wheels," but one soon realizes that decisions made on the basis of emotional response ("We must pacify the community!"), or that decisions made on the basis of personal gratification ("Will I get re-elected?" or "Will my position be a stepping stone to greater glory?") have a habit of becoming the wrong

decisions. They lead to situations of further conflict and confrontation of such magnitude that the very social fabric of the parish and school communities becomes endangered.

In Judaeo-Christian history, it is interesting that when leaders allowed themselves the luxury of compromise and followed a political process based on the wishes and desires of the majority, the spiritual and moral results within the community were devastating due to the majority's desire for comfort and expedience. This is a truth we find difficult, because its acceptance requires us to change our own philosophy and life style. We desire a life style which slakes our thirst for the temporal comforts of this world. Then we push, squeeze, and reshape the uncomfortable truths which we cannot ignore until they become perverted enough to fit the life style we desire. We find it difficult to accept that philosophy and truth must come first, and that our life style should result from and reflect that philosophy and truth.

When we speak of pragmatism and the "gray areas" of decision-making, are we only making excuses for our own gravitation toward expediency and the compromise of truth and philosophy? Is it not our collective responsibility within the continuing story of creation to do everything within our power to nurture and foster faith growth? In this, is there room for compromise?

The responsibilities of the Catholic school community are threefold. First, it is to assess the spiritual needs of the students placed in its care and meet them to the fullest measure of its members' capabilities. Second, through informed, knowledgeable leadership, it is to work with other members of the Catholic community at resolving inadequacies within the other structures of the Catholic community. Its third and most important responsibility is to bear witness to a strong, fundamental Catholic life style within, as well as outside, the confines of the school.

In order for the Catholic school to fulfill these responsibilities, the members of the school community should carry out a continuous program of personal self-evaluation in respect to them:

1. Do the members of the school community act in a way which exemplifies their primary concern for community faith growth rather than expediency?
2. Do the members of the school community act in a way which exemplifies their acceptance of each other's troubles, hurts, and sorrows rather than treat each other with condemnation?
3. Do the members of the school community act in a way which exemplifies their acceptance of the belief that only through active faith response can a witness to an acceptance of an eternal life with God, as the only meaningful purpose to life, be presented?

These questions do not deal with matters of conscience directly; rather they deal with matters of action. The exemplification of relationships is a matter of action based on the decisions of conscience. The same action may, however, be carried out for different reasons, and we do not have a window by which we may see into each other's souls. We therefore may not evaluate another's conscience, but only the action—and then only with love and understanding.

For many years fear prevented me from saying what I believed because I had little faith in myself. It was the faith, patience, and trust of a friend which fed my growth and gave me the strength I needed. Now that I have said what I believe, I do not apologize for it. I simply present it and ask for response to it, for what I believe is a matter of conscience. I must, however, never forget that I have more modifications to make to my anchor, and that I must not succumb to the temptations of pride, now that I have received the opportunity to say what I believe.

Above all, I must remember always that it is a person's beliefs which constitute the essence of what it is to be a person. Beliefs are like water held in a cupped hand: once they are compromised, even just a little, they seep out and can never be fully retrieved—and the person loses a part of him or herself forever. So it is with a community; it is the unity of a community's beliefs which keeps it together and strong. The more these beliefs are compromised, the more the community disintegrates, and the more difficult it becomes to retrieve what it once was.

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Teaching Faith in the Schools

Ralph Himsl

A few years ago we saw a piece of truth in the expression "God don't make no junk." We liked what it said, and we enjoyed the language. It helped us state what we wanted to believe about the kids we taught. "God don't make no junk," despite its inelegance, expresses a commitment in faith, and to the teaching of Jesus.

Ironically, we in the schools have had more success in seeing the working of that truth in the children than in ourselves. But it also refers to us, teachers and staff. "God made us; and God don't make no junk." When we put ourselves down, we fall from that expression of faith. That realization has a distinct theological quality to it. A psychological quality too.

This destructive act of putting ourselves down comes no doubt from a number of sources: our failure in faith certainly, and a failure of belief in Jesus' teachings. However, our mistaken view of error contributes to it too. We need to acquire the understanding of error as a means to our own growth. If we expect to live without mistakes and errors, we have the expectation of arrogance. Presumably God alone makes no mistakes. We can get around this by ridding ourselves of defensive disclaimers like "we all make mistakes." That phrase carries a touch of self-betrayal.

More usefully, we might recognize, accept, and embrace the reality that learning and growth occur as a result of mistakes. We ought to appreciate the great Japanese Mistake and what those people learned from it. Remember how, in 1941, they realized they needed raw materials and markets to survive as a nation? In December of that year they set out to secure both of these by military action. Things did not work out too well for them, you might say; what Tojo, Yamamoto, and Umezu could not do with wars, Honda, Suzuki, and Mazda did with cars—much to the satisfaction of all but a few sorehead North American car designers.

Perhaps a sharply critical mind might attack the proposition, but mistakes have only one purpose: to teach us! They have no business making us feel unworthy.

This healthful view of mistakes helps us teach the lesson that, as children of God, we have an entitlement to an intimate faith in ourselves, our weaknesses and faults notwithstanding.

And we have the privilege of teaching the same lesson in faith to the students.

The Next Step:
Developing the Principal as Spiritual Leader

Joe McMorrow

Introduction

"He holds a candle to the obvious, and is impressed by the discovery" is a remark university students make about plodding professors. It seems an insightful remark until you think about it. Holding a candle to the obvious can be a rare gift, because what we seem most blind to, or most ignorant of, is usually what is right before our eyes.

The greatest discoveries in human thought frequently involve a mere shift of attention to what is closest at hand. Darwin noticed the obvious variety in species and asked, "What process could have created such diversity?" Marx noticed the obvious sufferings of the lower classes and asked, "How, in the midst of abundance, can there be such marked class divisions?" Even more remarkable was Freud's discovery of the obvious that sexual feelings are intimately linked with our everyday consciousness and our psychic health.

David Hay, a British religious educator, is also, I believe, holding a candle to the obvious when he states that Europeans and North Americans are frightened of their spiritual feelings and suppress them from consciousness (Hay, 1985, p. 140). A comparison with Freud proves helpful here. Freud, in dealing with the mentally ill, came gradually to an awareness that many of his patients had suppressed the obvious—their sexual feelings—and this suppression was so crude and rigid as to create a pathological condition. Freud went on from there to notice how his culture promoted this repression, this blindness, on the part of individuals to what was closest and omnipresent to them—their own sexual feelings.

Our condition today is scarcely one of insensitivity to the sexual, but it is one of insensitivity to the spiritual. By spiritual I mean those feelings of, and desires for, peace, joy, unity, forgiveness, and love.

Our culture assumes that such feelings, like the sexual feelings of Freud's era, are best classified as "private and personal" and are not meant to be spoken aloud by cultured, educated people.

The bias against the spiritual results, according to David Hay, from our acceptance of inappropriate metaphors to describe what a human being is. Our culture has a materialist bias and resultingly believes that what really count, what really shape human life, are our physical, economic, and social needs; the spiritual is merely an escape of some sort, an

"We are all, as part of our culture marked by a profound suspicion of the spiritual."

illusory second storey built upon this materialistic base of life.

We are all, as part of our culture, marked by a profound suspicion of the spiritual. Even those of us involved in religious activities are comfortable with our spiritual feelings only when we are armed with a rationalistic theology which we hope will prevent us from getting in over our heads. We, like the Victorians, distrust feelings emanating from the heart.

The Principal and Spirituality

In Alberta, for the last six years, we have been attempting to renew the religious identity of our schools by focusing upon the development of the principal as a spiritual, religious leader of the local school community. This has been the unifying focus of our Bluprints conferences.

Our school principals are typical of our culture; they come to our conferences—like all of us— suspicious of the spiritual. And yet a breakthrough occurs. Our principals enter briefly into the counterculture of the conference and are allowed for a brief while to experience the spiritual. They are touched especially by speakers, like Fr. Rolheiser, who can analyze the everyday, the commonplace experiences of teaching, administering, and just plain living, and who through storytelling reveal the mystery of God's presence, the epiphanies of the infinite within the ordinary.

This constitutes for many of our principals a conversion experience which is reflected in their attempt to take it all back home to the local school.

I am convinced that for many the conversion is short-lived; when the principals, for example, return to their schools and speak at their next staff meetings, I know they will want, deeply and sincerely, to share their conference experiences; but they will find they do not have a vocabulary sufficient to the task. The principals will end up mumbling a few generalities and perhaps say "Blueprints was great! I got a lot of good ideas, but you really had to experience it. I can't describe it."

What happens in this oft repeated situation is that the culture and its materialist bias have triumphed. Upon returning home after the annual conference, the principals will slowly begin to suspect the solidity of their experience of the spiritual. Their newly discovered vocabulary of "covenant," "dedication," "faith community," "ministry," and "servant church" will seem curiously out of place and a bit odd. Whereas at the Blueprints conference they felt okay in using these words, now these terms seem "pushy," "arrogant," and just "too much." This religious vocabulary will all too often dry up and vanish, leaving a memory of a good experience—Blueprints—that is somehow indescribable and hence uncommunicable; therefore it is powerless to exert change at the school level.

In Alberta, the Blueprints conferences have set for themselves an ambitious agenda; we want to develop the religious dimension of our schools and have set about especially renewing the spiritual vision and life of our administrators. We have done so by adopting a format that is familiar and comfortable, the

educational conference with main speakers, discussion groups, and workshops. Yet, bit by bit, we have modified this by slowly introducing "process"; we have built in journal-keeping, buzz sessions, and group facilitators in order to personalize and deepen the conference experience. We have also improved the liturgies and prayer and recognized them as crucial.

I believe we are slowly leaving the "educational conference model" and adopting a "retreat model." We are recognizing how difficult are our goals of developing the religious dimension of our schools and the spiritual life of our administrators. Our difficulties are due to our insufficient appreciation of how countercultural it is to be a spiritual/professional, a religious/educator, a Catholic/school, a Christian/administrator.

Growing in Our Spirituality

The annual conference process we have been following, while achieving a great deal of good, will not be enough by itself to bring about the spiritual renewal we seek. The difficulty of our task can best be shown by a brief analysis of the power of metaphor and of how difficult it is to change our "root metaphors," from those which are suspicious of the spiritual to those which are accepting of the possibility of a life of faith which is attuned to our spiritual experience.

The metaphorical structuring of our thinking is difficult to appreciate because it is so ordinary.

> From the time we are infants we construct our world through metaphor; that is, just as young children learn the meaning of the color red by finding the thread of similarity through many dissimilar objects (red ball, red apple, red cheeks), so we constantly ask when we do not know how to think about something, "What is it like?" Far from being an esoteric or ornamental rhetorical device superimposed on ordinary language, metaphor is ordinary language. It is the way we think. We often make distinctions about ordinary and poetic language, assuming that the first is direct and the second indirect, but actually both are indirect, for we always think by indirection. The difference between the two kinds of language is only that we have grown accustomed to the indirections of ordinary language; they have become conventional. Likewise, conceptual or abstract language is metaphorical in the sense that the ability to generalize depends upon seeing similarity within dissimilarity; a concept is an abstraction of the similar from a sea of dissimilar. Thus, Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest is a high level metaphorical exercise of recognizing a similar pattern amid an otherwise incredibly diverse set of phenomena.
>
> (McFague, 1982, p. 16)

All thinking, whether in science, social science, religion, or just plain commonsense thinking, proceeds from the most fundamental facts of experience (images) to a symbolic and then to a metaphorical level. For example, in my memory are many images and symbols of "growth," such that the metaphor "life is growth" rings true. I can refine that metaphor into a more particular model, and speak about "personality growth." I can stretch it out and speak perhaps of "personality fulfillment," "threats to personality development," "personality traumas," or "pathological personalities." I could speak of "maturity" and "arrested development." I

"What we need, to truly accomplish a paradigm shift, a conversion of root metaphors for our principals is less a conference and more a novitiate."

could further develop this into concepts or theories by charting the stages of personality development. The amazing thing is that in doing this I would probably never reflect on the metaphorical nature of my thinking, because it is so natural, so ordinary, so commonplace. I would be aware simply of thinking, but I would certainly never be aware that my root metaphor is "life is growth."

The metaphoric possibilities of "growth" may not touch another. That person's memory may, for example, resonate more to memories and images of "pressure." A theory of personality that used "pressure" in its base metaphor for personality development (such as "the individual's ability to control and sublimate pressure from within and without") may appear to another more solid and real than "growth."

The metaphors we accept into our thinking are crucial. There are great differences created if we choose "melting pot" over "mosaic," or "cooperative" over "free market," or "all God's children" over "master race." So too, in school administration, metaphors shape our understanding, empower us to act and mold our distinctive style.

Imagine how administrative styles vary if one metaphorically understands the work as "maintaining order" and another understands it as "service to the children of God." Our administrators have been shaped, like all of us, by secular institutions which regard spiritual metaphors as simply inspirational or as aids to motivation, but not as basic to the way we function as professionals. Our conferences have been advocating that our administrators understand their work through religious metaphors and, for example, view their students as unique gifts of God whom we nurture and serve. The amazing thing is that so many of our participants seem to switch base metaphors, at least for the time of the conference; but I do not, however, believe that a single conference can bring about the deep change we desire. A change of base or root metaphors is a very slow process which usually takes several years of careful attention and nurture.

Implications

What we need to truly accomplish a paradigm shift, a conversion of root metaphors for our principals, is less a conference and more a novitiate. We need a second level of experience for those who have attended the Blueprints conferences. We need what other religious professionals have discovered they need: annual retreats, days of prayer, spiritual direction, courses of religious study, professional support groups, private prayer, self-discipline, and sacramental nourishment. No one today can lead a spiritual life without such support, direction, and self-care.

We need to take our principals' spiritual development as seriously as we do the spiritual development of our priests, sisters, and brothers. The demands today being placed upon the lay principal are heavier than those placed upon the religious priest, brother, or sister-principal of 10 years ago; and no one back then felt those religious professionals could get by with one conference every few years. To develop religiously, and more so to function in a leadership role as a religious/professional, demands an integration of

oneself, one's vocabulary, relationships, and values which requires serious formation.

A conference that would provide this second level of initiation would guide principals to:

- come to know what dominant metaphor guides their professional activities;
- prayerfully consider ministerial metaphors;
- discern how the spirit of God is inviting them in a unique manner to develop their educational ministry;
- expand their understanding of the implications of the models they find most appealing;
- consider actions and an administrative style that would flow out of this model;
- begin to grapple with the necessity for spiritual growth and support in order to develop as a Christian administrator.

Paul Ricoeur describes this type of process in theology as gaining a "second naiveté." A second naiveté is required theologically because we live (McFague, 1982) in a time when we have lost our religious innocence and do not approach religious metaphors in a simple, unselfconscious fashion. Ricoeur "insists that the main task of theology is interpretation that returns us to the primary language of a tradition with fresh possibilities for it becoming a transforming reality in our lives. . . . Just as a literary critic tries to interpret a poem or a novel in such a way as to return the reader to a deeper experience of the work of art, so the theologian tries to interpret an imagistic tradition in order to renew its religious potential" (p. 120).

In a similar manner we need to assist principals to return to the primary religious language of scriptural, religious, and spiritual images, symbols, and metaphors in order to reclaim them as transforming realities in their lives so that they approach their life's work with a religious freshness, innocence, and vigor.

To develop the principal as spiritual leader will demand the type of conversion that St. Paul prayed for the community at Ephesus:

> This, then, is what I pray, kneeling before the Father, from whom every fatherhood in heaven or on earth, takes its name. In the abundance of His glory may He, through His Spirit, enable you to grow firm in power with regard to your inner self, so Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love, with all God's holy people you will have the strength to grasp the breadth and length, the height and the depth, so that, knowing the love of Christ which is beyond all knowledge, you may be filled with the utter fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:14-20)

This next step in developing our principals as spiritual leaders will demand a consensus that will be difficult to achieve but worth the struggle.

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The School as an Agent of Change

Ralph Himsl

When I studied at university (or whatever I did there), we examined this aspect of the school as an oft recurring theme—almost in the same manner when, as elementary school boys, we had to write on the inspiring topic of what we did last summer. In elementary school I ground away at the one topic without motivation, and at university I essayed the other without comprehension.

Times change and so do people. Now, I find the activities of the summer (and the other seasons as well) sources of interest and wonder; and as for the schools, it has at last come to me how they can and do change society. The understanding of how the schools change society comes so clearly that the discovery, or rather my failure to make it long before now, embarrasses me. Doubtless people spoke of the meaning of the phrase in my presence, but my mind was on an out-of-body experience, woolgathering.

What did it mean, "Can the schools change society?" Perhaps it meant principals and teachers running for public office, and becoming like William Aberhart and Lyndon Johnson, leaders of their people. An attractive enough idea, but it had an accidental relationship to the school. Or perhaps it meant extensive curriculum changes such as the introduction of vocational education to the high schools of the early '60s; however, that seemed more like society changing the schools, since in this instance the change came from a vast initiative of the Federal Government, concerned once more about unemployment. The schools responded rather than led; they reflected rather than shone.

Such propositions miss the essential ingredients of the school, namely the student and the teacher; but social change can start there. If, for example, in 1970 the schools in Western Canada graduated few if any students fluent in English and French, and if in 1990 those same schools, each year, graduate 2,000 students able to speak both languages, we have the start of a social change. Again, if our teachers stick strictly to their tasks, and resolve in their day-to-day work to bend their every effort to enhancing the self-image of the child, testing all their practices against this criterion, and altering the practices where they fail the test, will the teachers not bring about a social change? In so doing, the teacher gives the students a tested set of intellectual skills as he teaches—at the same time as he gives them a resilient disposition which enables them to appreciate errors as a part of the human condition and as necessary to learning. Errors resemble grapefruit: big, slightly bitter, and nourishing. If the teachers of Alberta, each year, poured into society 28,000 persons who knew how to use their mistakes, free of the curse of diminished self-esteem because of them, the teachers would ring a social change.

In my student days, the proposition sought an examination of the school as an agent of social change, as if that school has an existence apart from the people in it. No doubt that idea of school has something of value in it, and it looks like a dandy for an academic study. But the idea of teachers through their appreciation of the meaning of error bringing about social change, why that smacks of life itself!

A Lexicon With a Vision: Where to Now?[1]

Richard L. Laplante

"Blueprints" is a word which has different meanings for different users. For example, architects, designers, and engineers use the term for their specific, visual, structural plans.

Since 1981, the word blueprints has also been appropriated for specific use within the Alberta Catholic school community. It is now associated closely with the overall reflection-action process updating Catholic school practice and theory in the light of Vatican II.

Blueprints is both a plan and a process. As a plan, it is an attempt to more fully define the mission and ministry of Alberta's Catholic schools. In this sense it respects the integrity of basic educational dynamics while enabling a staff to empower themselves in their Christian religious vision. As a process, Blueprints recognizes that Catholic educators, administrators, trustees, parents, and parish can cooperate with each other within their community and across various regions of Alberta. In this sense, Blueprints is an intense people-building enterprise.

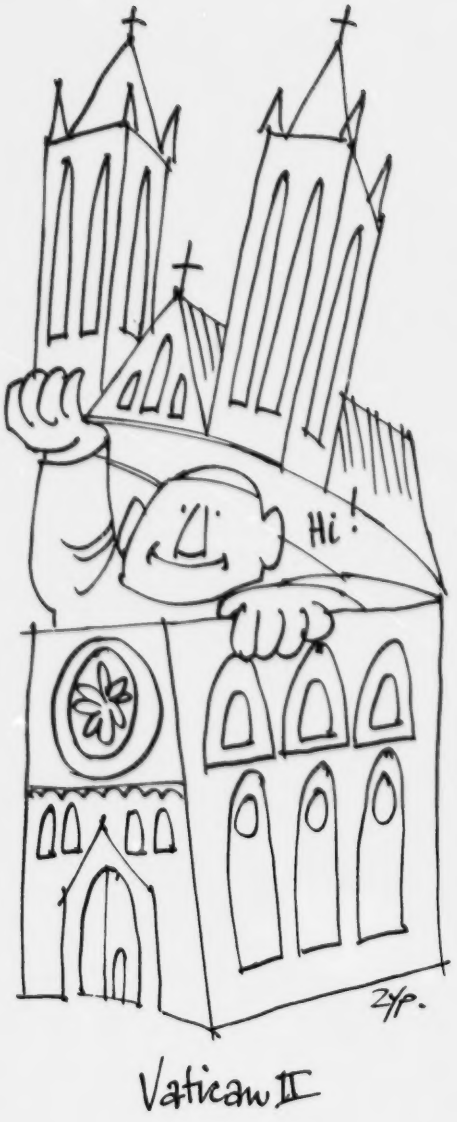
As in all our endeavors, we evolve language to describe, to nurture, and to act upon meanings experienced through this process. In the words of the Blueprints '82 Conference objectives, "a community of discourse" is evolving (ACSTA, 1981-1986).

At the 1985 annual conference, Calgary's Marie Matchett summarized five years of Blueprints.

> What's happened to us over the last five years? We've changed. We've grown in knowledge. We've discovered that we have among us a cadre of gifted and articulate scholars to whom we may refer when we have a need for inspiration or for clarification of our own thought. We've grown affectively. We've acquired a sense of solidarity and a recognition of our common purpose. We've become stronger, more courageous, more ready to take risks. We've come to grips with our pluralism and are prepared to celebrate it. We've become comfortable with the idea of teaching as ministry and we've come to rely on prayer as the sustaining component in all of our endeavors. (p. 7)

At the same conference, Fort McMurray's Joe McMorrow (1985) echoed this new Catholic school confidence and language.

> What I find or detect in myself, in my own voice, in my own sense of things, is a kind of new confidence that is becoming widespread about Catholic schools. We are coming to a . . . recognition of what we are about as Catholic schools. It seems possible to me that our language is beginning to reflect our reality. There was a time in the past when we asked, "What are Catholic schools?" and one cliché was used again and again: "We're about the whole person. We're educating the whole person." We've



said "whole person" so many times that it's lost meaning. (p. 11)

A Lexicon with a Vision: A Community Based Language for the Alberta Catholic Schools is a study of some of the language used in the Blueprints renewal movement. Through a cybernetic feedback model, it demonstrates three fundamental realities about the language which identifies and affirms Alberta Catholic schools today.

First, a distinct language exists as manifested through the 30 words and expressions identified for this project. The Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA) has published these words in a lexicon—*Do You Mean What We Mean?*[2] (1985) is the title of this publication. Some of these words and expressions are new since Vatican II, others have existed for a long time. Second, this language has identifiable and community based meanings attached to each word. Some of these meanings emerged from Vatican II, others are an extension of previous understandings. Third, the language system advocates a distinct vision of schooling, one which leads to specific actions.

Delineated below are some of the specific actions, implications, and further Blueprints research possiblities which *A Lexicon With a Vision* suggests.

Specific Actions

Obviously, Catholic school people and parents should be using the specific language which lies at the heart of their enterprise. Language is both the expression of inner convictions, ideas, and thought processes, and a reinforcer of community-held values. Either way, it can be prophetic; it can lead to advocacy, to questions, to new behavior. If Catholic school partners do not use their own language, then an observer could wonder if they in fact share a common vision or simply cannot express it. For professionals of language (educators), lack of a common language can be awkward.

Inasmuch as the lexicon *Do You Mean What We Mean?* either expresses a common vision or reinforces "hoped for" changes, it should find extensive use among Catholic school partners. The ACSTA has already exercised considerable prophetic leadership by its wide usage of many lexicon words in the Blueprints process in its annual conference brochures, outcomes packages, and in its Blueprints video (ACSTA, 1981-86). The ACSTA has also formally utilized the lexicon as an attached background reference for the explicit identification of the Catholic school role in the current School Act revision process. (In the present Act, Catholic schools are not named as such.)

The ACSTA has taken a further action. It has directed its Executive Director "to investigate the possibilities and potential difficulties of publishing the Catholic school lexicon in a French version" (ACSTA, 1985a). This is another indication of the ACSTA's resolve to make the lexicon available and to have it utilized by many sectors of the Alberta Catholic school community.

Other uses of the lexicon would demonstrate its validity as expressing both the Catholic school vision and vocabulary. Currently, most Catholic school boards are revising or

establishing key policies; in this process many are using the lexicon as background support material. Other possible uses would be as a key orientation handbook for new teachers and interns hired by Alberta Catholic school districts. This is a long-standing need in Alberta: an updated, common, and manageable description of the Alberta Catholic school rationale and identity which can be used across the province for staff orientation. The lexicon could also be used for administrator and teacher professional development, for communication purposes with parents, and with the greater public. In fact, if successful, it should serve as a resource for many Catholic school district public relations efforts.

All of these uses could be further researched at a later point to ascertain if the lexicon truly serves as a catalyst in the Alberta Catholic school community's unique language development. In other words, does the lexicon express both a point of language consolidation and a departure for further language development?

In this regard, the lexicon already parallels another language/meaning development sponsored by the ACSTA: *Visions for the Catholic School* (1985b). These two books are companions.

> *Visions for the Catholic Schools* is a collection of essays by six of the foremost thinkers and writers in Alberta's Catholic education community. Topics covered include "Christian Unity and Catholic Schools," "The Gospel-Centered School," and "Roles and Relationships in Catholic Schools." Each essay pursues a central theme of Blueprints, a creative force and process developed in Alberta over the past six years. This process has done much to define the mission or "vision" for the Catholic school. Now the first volume of the Blueprints Reader brings the vision to you, the reader.
>
> [When the lexicon is] used in conjunction with *Visions for the Catholic School*, it will deepen understanding. Alone, it is an indispensable reference and guide to the emerging and evolving language of the post-Vatican II era.
>
> Whether purchased separately or as companion volumes, these two new titles produced for the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association are a "must" for educators across Canada. The educational practitioner or observer within the province will find an informative overview of the philosophy, the literature, and the vocabulary of Catholic education. Those beyond the Alberta and Northwest Territories borders will find the volumes beneficial for the purpose of comparing the direction of Catholic education here with initiatives at their own provincial and national level. (ACSTA, 1985b)

By way of a historical note, the lexicon development anteceded the Blueprints Reader project. Yet they support and validate each other, since they are expressions of the same Blueprints experience. They have common parents; they are fraternal twins.

One of the most conclusive actions arising out of the lexicon would be the development of further unique Catholic school words and phrases. There is nothing magical or absolute about these first 30. In fact, if 30 could be identified and elaborated on at this time, it is quite likely that many more exist and could follow a similar development. The 30-word limit was set for pragmatic reasons. It is to be hoped that this lexicon will lead to further words very soon; at the very least, it should

be revised within an acceptable period of time.

Further Research

Besides the anticipated use of the lexicon and further word development, other research possibilities exist for language related projects in Alberta's Catholic schools.

One of the most immediate would be the creation of further Blueprints Reader volumes. Because the Reader project attempts to unravel the mission and ministry of Alberta's Catholic schools, some worthy topics could be: teaching as ministry, societal values and the Gospel, Catholic school life (school culture), transforming the social vision of Catholic school clientele, teaching religious education in a non-school paradigm, and adult church/young people. A second Blueprints Reader group began this work in late January 1986. This volume is the fruit of their endeavors.

A second promising area of research would be the concurrence between parents and professionals with respect to language to describe Catholic school goals.

A third area of research would be the specific relationship between official church and Catholic school people with respect to language utilized, theologies implied, and respective roles in practice. Garvey (1985) has begun this work. Ksiazek elaborates the theme further in this volume with his article "The Ecology of Catholic Schools."

A fourth area of research would be the incorporation of the lexicon vocabulary and vision into all Catholic school teacher preservice or inservice professional development. In this regard, the ACSTA sponsored a first SPICE Seminar (Sharing Purpose in Catholic Education) for teachers in the summer of 1986 (ACSTA, 1986a). It featured not only the lexicon and the *Visions* book, but incorporated the mission and ministry language in all its deliberations and planning. The integration of mission and ministry language is particularly problematic with respect to preservice teacher education because public universities provide basic teacher education in Alberta. By and large they refuse to use this language on "non-sectarian" grounds. The history of Catholic teacher professional development, current practices, and future possibilities would lead to a very promising study. Tkach (1984) traced some of these developments.

A fifth area of research would be the relationship between Catholic school vocabulary and vision with specific outreach activities into the local, national, and international communities. Zyp presents such an effort in this collection with his article "Break A Leg!" His social justice thrust parallels in large part the ecumenical dimension stressed in *Do You Mean What We Mean?*

The sixth area of research would be the impact of technology (computers, television, radio, videos, tele/audioconferencing) on the evolving Catholic school vocabulary. It could be hypothesized that, with the more available and instant communication instruments which modern technology provides, the language development in Alberta's Catholic school would become more consistent across the province.

A seventh area of research would be to examine if, and how well, the ACSTA updates and integrates this lexicon language into all its bylaws, position papers, publicity, and working documents. The bylaw revisions work was initiated by the trustees in January 1986 and completed in November of the same year (ACSTA, 1986b). Burger's analysis of Blueprints as a megapolicy (1987) is another example of how and to what extent the mission and ministry language should interrelate with all ACSTA activities.

An eighth area of research would be the development of an annotated version of the bibliography which was prepared for *A Lexicon With a Vision* and published in *Visions*. It would become an indispensable tool for further Catholic school related research in this province.

A ninth area of research would be integration of the mission and ministry language into specific educational practices ranging from report cards to thinking skills. Himsl (1987) has been pursuing some of these topics in his series of *Viewpoints* letters, some of which are published in this volume. McMorrow (1987) has explained the key leadership role of the principal personally in promoting this sense of mission.

Implications

As elaborated throughout *Do You Mean What We Mean?* the mission and ministry of Catholic schools is not a static reality. Either an individual or a collective does something about their heightened community awareness—their vision—or they ignore this reality and choose to live by another vision.

In the last few years the Alberta Catholic community has chosen to attempt to modify school practices while deepening its vision. One of the most direct implications of this heightened awareness and new vocabulary is a sense of pride. This sense of pride has led to a more positive outlook about the Catholic school venture. This pride is much less ghettoish than in the past; Catholic schools perceive themselves today much more as serving their people while serving society at large.

A second implication flowing from the first is the necessity for Catholic schools to support societal ventures where warranted and to criticize them if they are in conflict with the Gospel vision. This is nowhere more evident than in the very process of schooling where the leveling tendencies of society have to be counteracted by the Christian affirmation of the values of community and person. But other areas of Catholic school life have to be examined very closely in respect to Gospel vision: labor relations practices, personnel development practices, evaluation practices, hiring practices, and administrative decision-making practices.

A third implication is for Catholic schools to take seriously the Spirit's challenge of interchurch marriages. Children from such marriages can bring an enriched Christian experience to Catholic schools, one that needs recognition, affirmation, and study. Laplante (1983) has reflected on this phenomenon.

A fourth implication of this renewed language will be for the Alberta Teachers'

Association to find ways to recognize Catholic schooling more explicitly within its various teacher services.

A fifth implication will be for universities to find better ways to prepare teachers for the Catholic sector of public schooling in Alberta. This will have to be done within an ecumenical framework.

A sixth implication will be for Alberta Education to find more specific ways to provide support services for legitimate Catholic school needs than it has in the past. This is particularly indicated regarding the department's requirements in school evaluation, and in religious studies program development.

As manifested in the lexicon, the renewed sense of pride and identity among Catholic schools is full of promise both for Alberta Catholic schools and for other related agencies in the schooling world. Further research on this new phenomenon is highly desirable. If it occurs, it will indicate that Catholic school partners have reached a new level of maturity.

To the extent that the Alberta Teachers' Association, Alberta universities, and Alberta Education encourage and participate in this research, they will further recognize the new Catholic school and be enriched by its collective experience.

More importantly, it is up to the Catholics of Alberta to better understand and to support their priceless Canadian legacy, the Catholic school. It is also crucial for Catholics to discuss how their schools can further enrich, interrelate with, and challenge Alberta society.

"Either an individual or a collective does something about their heightened community awareness, their vision - or they ignore this reality and choose to live by another vision."

Author's Notes

1. This article is a revised version of part of my project-dissertation *A Lexicon With a Vision* (pp. 129-139) listed in the references below.
2. *Do You Mean What We Mean?* is the project portion of my dissertation.

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High as an elephant's eye

Student Achievement in a Catholic School

Ralph Himsl

Look upon student achievement as a garden. In this garden grow a variety of vegetables and flowers: radishes, potatoes, daisies, slumbering zucchini, strawberries, corn, asparagus, pensive pansies, and some garlic cloves. All grow according to their kind and circumstance. The gardener uses one measure to express the success of this work: a stick two meters long. He assesses the height of all his crops with the same stick. Of course, he misses qualities of some of the plants: radish-crunch, new-potato-flavor, the daisies' freshness, zucchini bulk, not to mention a good chance of giving no account of the only reason for growing garlic.

He thinks he might measure those qualities, but they have a powerful subjective nature; he wants reliable, demonstrable measures, so he uses his stick. By and by, because it stands up to a two-meter stick best, the gardener takes only the height of his plants.

"High as an elephant's eye," he sings of his corn.

Pity the strawberries, their sweetness wasted on the earthbound palates of sowbugs and slugs. Strawberries do not measure well on any scale of heights. A measurement of the height of a pansy seems meaningless.

If this gardener represents student achievement, the gardener, let's call him Mellors, becomes the teacher. And as he did in his old persuasion, he uses a simple measuring stick, a scale of 0-100. He measures only the achievement of students on tests, the height of the plants in the garden he once grew.

The other aspects of student growth go scarcely acknowledged by the evaluation process: the ability to speak and debate, skill in teamwork, readiness to affirm, the disposition to enquire, persistence in the face of difficulty. Mellors cannot express them on the scale he uses.

Nevertheless, through dint of hard work, he does so well with his skill and disposition that he comes to the attention of Alberta Education, joins their staff in the Student Evaluation Branch, and proceeds to manufacture an elaborate set of tests, achievement and diploma. Good tests of their kind, but sorely limited for all that. Still, because of the elegance of the processes to which Alberta Education subjects the numbers, and the resourcefulness of Mellors and his colleagues in manipulating them, we assign them a quite unmerited credence. And they do a bad thing: they grade the children, not simply their achievement on tests. Like eggs: grade A, B, C, cracks and culls. Government Certified.

However, teachers in Catholic schools seek a variety of appropriate means to describe the achievement of children. Marks do tell something and we need to retain them; but they don't tell everything and we need to supplement them.

Parents welcome marks, but they find diagnostic statements informative—statements by the teacher that identify, in behavioral terms, the strengths and weaknesses of the child. And especially so when they indicate the instructional intent of the teacher, or suggestions to them as to how parents might help. They appreciate the teacher's analysis of the work in their child's notebook, and comments on lab work, and so on and so on.

The widespread trust which parents have for intelligent, temperate comment from the teachers of their children remains an enduring satisfaction. These children, these children of God, elude the clumsy compass of the gardener's measure.

Policy Implications of Blueprints: Future Forces Shaping Catholic Education

John Burger

Introduction

The virtual disappearance of priests and nuns from Catholic school administration in the 1960s resulted in a transfer of school leadership to the laity by default rather than by design. In 1955, 85% of Edmonton Catholic school principals were women religious, but by 1975, they were fewer than five percent; noting the universality of the phenomenon, Garvey (1985, p. 46) cites the "world-wide decline in vocations which decreased the numbers of religious in our schools."

Lay Catholic administrators who replaced the religious administrators lacked the linking mechanism to the formal structure of the church which the religious had shared. In many cases, especially in rural areas, the new lay administrators had no link even to one another. The Blueprints movement was in fact rooted in a growing awareness among lay Catholic school administrators of their need to create these links, in order to share a common vision of the goals of Catholic schools in a changing environment.

This need was first identified by administrators at a 1979 conference in Calgary. The Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA) responded by initiating Blueprints in 1981 with the first formal Blueprints Conference in Calgary. As the ACSTA (1985, p. 3) states, "participants wanted to explore anew the central purposes of Catholic education; they wanted to work more effectively together in pursuing those purposes through goal setting, strategic planning and action."

This paper will discuss the Blueprints process defined by the Blueprints Conferences 1981 through 1986 as a megapolicy and will consider causal relationships, advocative constructs and policy forecasting techniques to explore the possible effects of Blueprints in the years ahead.

Megapolicy Implications of Blueprints

A megapolicy (Dror, 1971, p. 63) is a master policy which "involve[s] determination of the postures, assumptions and main guidelines to be followed by specific policies." Megapolicy reflects the environmental and political forces which determine future events. It is determined by and determines future possibilities of policy outcomes.

A megapolicy establishes overall guidelines for large sets of concrete policies (Dror, 1971, p. 63). The Blueprints Mission Statement is a

"A changing church requires changing organizational structures in relationship to the Catholic school districts."

10-point statement which provides overall guidelines to the Blueprints process. Laplante (1985, p. 21) describes the Mission Statement as a "1980s Catholic school creed developed within the post-Vatican II Catholic school experience in Alberta . . . a statement of ideas, of what we want to become." According to the ACSTA Blueprints School Profile Questionnaire, the Mission Statement can be categorized into four parts involving (a) the Christian philosophy underlying the Catholic school system; (b) the environment outside the Catholic school; (c) the internal environment involving the principal/adminstration; and (d) the internal environment involving the teacher/student. (The complete Mission Statement appears on page vii.)

The capacity of the Mission Statement to act as a megapolicy document for Catholic schools will be examined from nine perspectives identified by Dror (1971, pp. 63-74).

Goals and Guidelines

The first perspective involves the capacity of a megapolicy to establish overall goals or guidelines, to identify definite goals, and to define future choices and the best methods to achieve the desired goals. The Mission Statement clearly defines overall and definite goals in relation to the unique mission of Catholic schools, but does not define methods of achieving specific goals.

Rewriting of the Mission Statement by some school districts has occurred in order to relate the document to local needs. Indeed, consensus regarding the Mission Statement's composition has never been anticipated or urged.

Dror (1971, p. 65) notes that "it may be easier to achieve agreement on avoidance of a bad situation than on moving toward a good situation." The dissonance between political culture, the mechanics of agreement, and difficulties of coalition maintenance will create some dissipative forces among Catholic school districts regarding the Mission Statement and the Blueprints process. However, the benefits of being able to identify universal or "catholic" goals for Catholic schools in the provincial context argues for maintenance of the Mission Statement and Blueprints in one form or another as an overall goal defining document and process.

Policy and Institutional Boundaries

The second megapolicy perspective relates to the question of policy boundaries (Dror, 1971, p. 65) and the domain of institutions which should be objects for the defined policies. Mission Statement No. 3 refers to the school as a dimension of the church:

> Catholic schools exist as that dimension of the church concerned with directing secular educational formation towards an encounter with this world of the sacred. This means providing an education that prepares the way of the Lord, that opens up secular learning to its relationship with God's saving call in Christ and in Christian history.

This role of school and the wider school-church community (comprising the external school environment) raises questions regarding these organizations which the Mission

Statement and the wider Blueprints process should address.

Since 1981, Blueprints has focused primarily on central office and school administrators. In 1986, the Blueprints process expanded for the first time to classroom teachers with a "Sharing Purpose in Catholic Education" (SPICE) Conference. While growth of the Blueprints process is evident, the growth pattern is fractionalized to serve trustee, administrator, and teacher groups separately. However, reciprocal linkages with the church hierarchy also warrant consideration if the schools are indeed a dimension of the church. A changing church requires changing organizational structures in relationship to the Catholic school districts. Opportunities exist to create these structures with church and school as equal partners in pursuing the vision of Catholic education's future. Policy boundaries would be clarified if Blueprints included trustees, administrators, teachers, and church leaders for formal conferencing and planning experiences.

Time Frames

What are the time implications of the Mission Statement and the Blueprints process? This third megapolicy issue of Dror (1971, p. 65) focuses on whether the policy goals are immediate or long-term. For example, a commitment to Blueprints can be renewed annually; or a five-, 10-, or 20-year plan may be created to guide the process. The task of creating a long-term plan would be difficult, but if successful, the positive effects on unifying the Catholic community within the context of Catholic education would be significant.

Long-term planning with diverse groups does involve some risk. And "risk acceptability" related to innovative change are the fourth and fifth issues of megapolicy.

Innovation and Risk

Dror (1971, p. 67) suggests that with risk acceptability, "the issue . . . is mainly whether one is ready to accept the higher risks associated usually with more innovation, or whether one prefers the lower risks often associated with incremental change." Innovation for innovation's sake is not advocated; the point is that effective acquisition of policy goals tends to be associated with an innovative stance. The risk associated with the willingness to explore and experiment with innovative approaches can be minimized through mechanisms such as pilot projects or phased implementation strategies.

Policy Scope

A sixth megapolicy consideration is the degree of policy comprehensiveness versus narrowness. The four areas to which the Mission Statement relates, and the range of client groups, suggest the Blueprints process has the potential to be comprehensive. Essentially, then, the Blueprints process can be narrow, incremental, and fractionalized on one extreme, or comprehensive, innovative, and unified at the other extreme. In planning Blueprints strategy, varying degrees and combinations of these options may be selected.

"Blueprints emerged as a response to a perceived need identified by Catholic administrators... But has the problem structuring process been effective?"

Alternative Futures

The seventh facet applies especially to long-term, comprehensive megapolicy which warrants consideration of alternative futures assumptions (Dror, 1971, p. 70). For example, what implications would a further decline or an infusion of clerics in the church have on the Blueprints process? Megapolicy approaches argue that such "futures" questions should be considered in contingency planning.

Resource Availability

Megapolicy analysis involves an eighth consideration: resource availability. Resources such as money, qualified personnel, information, communication networks, and time, might be considered. Long-term megapolicy approaches argue for novel, multiple-year budgeting procedures and the psychological commitment to protracted allocation of resources to the attainment of policy goals.

Choosing Policy Instruments

Lastly, implementation of megapolicy goals requires delineation of specific policy instruments. Selection of Blueprints implementation strategies should be based on a divergent consideration of the range of implementation options available under the megapolicy dimensions which have been discussed above. Evoking closure on implementation strategies never occurs, since a continual feedback and evaluation process necessitates continuing assessment of the implementation process.

Blueprints and Problem Structuring

Blueprints emerged as a response to a perceived need identified by Catholic administrators. It has spawned an effective solution, demonstrated by the six consecutive, successful Blueprints conferences. But has the problem structuring process been effective? Has it avoided solution of the wrong formulation of a problem when the right one should have been resolved (a type III error)?

The question is raised here not to suggest that the past decision-making has been flawed, but to provoke divergent thought regarding the future orientation of Blueprints.

The changes in the church community which are identified with the post-Vatican II era created distinct demands for adaptation on all Catholic school stakeholder groups. These post-Vatican II changes may be expected to have continuing effects on Catholic schools. The problem-structuring process, therefore, might profitably be revised to incorporate a broader clientele or more complete linkages to provide a contemporary pulse on the living church.

The ACSTA has recently formed a Blueprints long-range planning committee. It was influential in holding the SPICE teachers' conference in the summer of 1986. The creation of this group offers the opportunity to generate divergent assumptions about the future through brainstorming, assumptional analysis, and other policy planning techniques. The risk of type III error should be given specific consideration by the long-range planning committee to ensure that

inadequate vision does not guide future Blueprints policy decisions. Dunn (1981, p. 110) notes that "skills most appropriate for defining substantive problems are conceptual and theoretical, which suggests that policy analysts should be trained in philosophy, ethics, and general social theory as well as mathematics and statistical subjects." In other words, planning is enhanced when the planners maintain a divergent, proactive relationship with the larger environmental context rather than a convergent, reactive stance.

Blueprints as a Policy Process

The policy analysis process, Dunn (1981, p. 36) suggests, produces information regarding facts, values, or actions. Factual information is empirical and designative. Values information is evaluative and specifies worth. Action information is normative and advocative. Blueprints has represented a dynamic mixture of these three policy analysis processes. The Mission Statement, for example, represents both theologically based "fact" as well as values, both ethically and in terms of what is valued in Catholic education; and it is advocative in guiding future directions for Catholic schools.

The Mission Statement and Blueprints conferences provide a highly visible representation of what Catholic education is about. Consequently, Blueprints generates a dual effect.

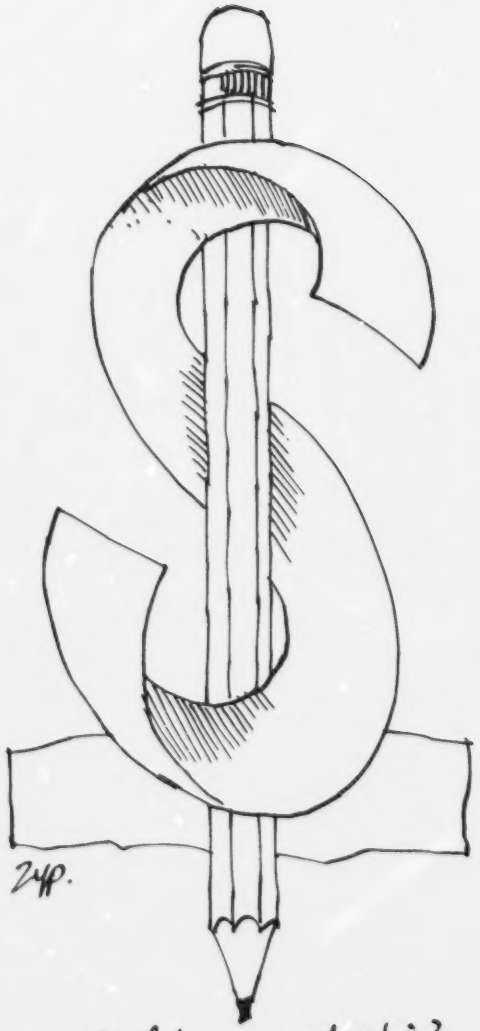
The first is symbolic whereby Blueprints represents itself, that is, a conference of Catholic school administrators; but it is also something more, that is, the image of a unified group bound together by both professional objectives and by a mystical aspect of the church.

The second effect is substantive. Blueprints has generated a refinement and definition of the real issues and goals of Catholic school administrators, as is evidenced by the district-level planning activities basic to each Blueprints conference.

Both the symbolic and substantive aspects of Blueprints fulfill a political function for the ACSTA and the entire Catholic educational community: that of projecting the image of a powerful interest group on the stage of educational politics in the province. This spin-off benefit of Blueprints likely creates indirect benefits, such as the image of political unity among Catholic school districts with the Department of Education. While these indirect benefits may appear intangible, they hold long-term and potentially critical implications for Catholic education.

Policy Implementation Perspectives on Blueprints

Smith (1973, p. 197) views policy implementation as a tension-generating force in society, involving idealized policy, the implementing organization, target groups, and environmental factors. The implementation process is often volatile, with patterns of transaction often not matching the expectations of outcomes held by the policy formulators. (For example, the Blueprints School Profile Questionnaire, intended as a planning device for schools, was in practice perceived as an evaluation instrument and its planning potential was not realized.)



Some visions provide us only with a better view of our own belly button

Implementation of Blueprints and the Mission Statement as megapolicy with related overall goals, broad policy boundaries, long-term time frames, high risk acceptability, and innovative and comprehensive concepts suggest that Smith's conceptualization of implementation may be relevant.

A major contributor to the volatility of policy implementation processes rests with environmental factors. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981, p. 3) caution that "many of the case studies that form the bulk of the implementation literature become so immersed in the details of program implementation that they lose sight of the macro-level legal and political variables that structure the entire process."

Van Meter and Van Horn (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1981, pp. 4-5) suggest that policy implementation processes involve eight factors which affect program performance: (a) policy standards; (b) policy resources (basically funds); (c) support for those policies in the political environment; (d) economic and social conditions; (e) characteristics of the implementing agencies; (f) communication of policy standards and other decisions among the implementing agencies; (g) incentives to promote compliance with policy decisions; and (h) the policy dispositions of implementing officials. These variables offer categorical guidance in planning the long-term implementation of Blueprints megapolicy.

These eight factors clearly focus the political nature of megapolicy implementation and underscore the potential fragility of implementation. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981, p. 9) emphasize this caution by noting that the larger and less definable the target group, the less likely political support can be mobilized in favor of the program; and the greater the amount of behavioral change required, the more problematic successful implementation will be.

Other barriers to successful implementation involve coordinating action and commitment among semiautonomous agencies such as Catholic school districts, as in the case of Blueprints implementation. Time frames are important also, and Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981, p. 22) note that longer-term implementation programs are more problematic than short-term programs. Finally, they suggest that short-term concerns are endogenous and long term concerns are exogenous, that is, environmental—again underscoring the political nature of megapolicy implementation.

Blueprints and Policy Forecasting

Interorganizational relationships between the ACSTA, Alberta Education, individual Catholic school districts, and the church will present both challenges and opportunities for the long-range development and implementation of Blueprints. Dror (1971, p. 62) suggests that "policy analysis constitutes the main prescriptive method of policy sciences for improving complex decisions."

Dunn (1981, p. 141) defines policy forecasting as a "method of producing factual information about future states of society on the basis of information about the nature of policy problems." Dunn identifies three forms of policy forecasts: projection, based on current

and historical trends; prediction, based on theoretical assumptions; and conjecture, based on subjective judgment.

Policy forecasting can be used to estimate three possible types of future societal states: plausible futures regarding what will be; potential futures regarding what might be; and normative futures regarding what should be (Dunn, 1981, p. 143).

Policy forecasting techniques are relevant to the Blueprints process, because its megapolicy characteristics discussed in this paper define a dynamic environment which demands a proactive stance, obtainable through policy forecasting procedures. Policy forecasting also presents the opportunity to introduce an additional mechanism of divergent planning through consideration of what will be, what might be, and what should be. The Mission Statement is in large part a normative document advocating desirable future states for Catholic schools. Policy forecasting can provide powerful tools to help guide the way to the future.

Conclusion

The Blueprints process and the Mission Statement are essentially megapolicies for Catholic education in Alberta. By examining the Blueprints process from a policy perspective, the potentialities, as well as the possible risks, can be clarified.

Smith (1973, p. 208) suggests that "a test of an established organization's [or megapolicy's] institutionality [or successful implementation] is whether demands for the activity would be sufficient to force its continuance." Six years of high and increasing demand for the annual Blueprints conferences suggests that the Blueprints process has achieved institutionalized status with Catholic school administrators of the province. The time has arrived, however, to restructure the problem and, through policy analytic and forecasting mechanisms, to examine the megapolicy implications of Blueprints.

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incarnating Christ in the community
community as sacrament

Purposes, Reference, and Encounter

Ralph Himsl

"The Catholic school loses its purpose without constant reference to the Gospel and a frequent encounter with Christ."

The famous postconciliar document, *The Catholic School*, makes that flat declaration. The importance of the document, the sentence, and the sense it carries merit reflection. "Constant reference to the Gospel" seems clear enough. What about a "frequent encounter with Christ"? How do we do it?

A visitor who conducted observations in one of our elementary schools tells of one incident which might qualify. As he prepared to take his leave of a Grade 4 class, the teacher asked him if he would accept a blessing from the children. This surprised the visitor, but he agreed and enjoyed a simple and new experience. As the children raised their hands and voices in his cause, his surprise turned to enchantment.

An assistant principal recounted an incident that brought the listeners to their chairs' edges. Some of the teachers and the administration had over a period of time developed a not too successful relationship with a large student. The young man had formed terms of his own for staying in high school. The school people could not accept them. His manner became menacing He proposed decision by combat and appointed the school gym as the place. If he won the fight, the school would do things his way; if he lost, he would leave. In due course, the school people called on the boy's guardian, his aunt. Another tension-crowded interview ensued.

When things had built again, the aunt said to the administrators, "Say! Are you guys Catholics? Then let's pray." And she led a meditation on the need to seek the guidance of the light of Christ.

Our Bishop spoke of his delight with what he learned during a recent visit to a school in his city. He went to an ECS classroom, and during his talks to the children, he asked them to recite the Hail Mary.

They could not do it!

I thought to myself, "Now we're in for it." But the Bishop went on, "The teacher took us all over to the creche and asked a child to lead a prayer as we gathered around. What an experience! The children took over in a spontaneous, profound expression of love through prayer."

This last one I myself experienced. A group of men on an inspection tour of a school building came into a class where a teacher had recorded on the chalkboard some preparations for the next day. Among other things, she had written a simple prayer. "O my God, I offer you this day, everything that I may think or do or say!" One of the men in the party, Leo H., said to another, Frank G., "Do you start your day like that, Frank?' Frank swung away, searching for a moment and place of privacy, and replied, "My God, Leo! You make me ashamed."

In these events, participated learned enchantment, admiration, delight, and insight. And they reflected, "Is that how Jesus teaches? Nudging a bit here, saying 'Look, Look! Do you want to try this?'"

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